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The Honorable Mike Mansfield  
United States Senate  
Washington 25, D. C.

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Dear Senator Mansfield:

I have noted with great interest the language training provisions of the bill which you and Senator Saltonstall introduced on the 25th of March. This is a subject which has received my close attention for a number of years for I feel it is essential that employees serving abroad acquire a useful knowledge of the language of the area of their prospective assignment.

In view of your interest in this field, I thought you might like to know what we are doing in language training. I am enclosing a brief analysis of our Language Development Program. We started intensive work in this field three years ago and I think significant progress has been made toward the development of a language competence in this Agency that will prove highly valuable to the United States Government.

For example, in the week beginning 8 January 1958 we had 245 personnel enrolled in 46 classes during hours, involving 15 languages; 153 enrolled in 20 classes before hours (from 0715 to 0815), involving 7 languages; and 193 enrolled in 26 classes after hours (from 1730 to 1930), involving 10 languages. There were also basic country surveys and integrated language-area studies. In order to accomplish as much as possible in the training field without interfering too much with our daily work, we have adopted such techniques as a noontime movie program using a large number of foreign films to improve simultaneously both area knowledge and language ability.

I am impressed with your interest in the Government training programs, and would be delighted if you could find the time to see our training establishment.

Sincerely,

Allen W. Dulles  
Director

Enclosure

OGC/LC/GLC/ckm (27 March 1958)

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**THE CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY**  
**LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM**

In 1955 an intensive study was initiated to determine the best method to increase the competence of CIA personnel in foreign languages.

The general objectives of the language program were to be:

First, that personnel should have a working knowledge of at least one or more of the widely spoken languages--such as French, German, Spanish and Russian. Not only would this language ability prove valuable in day to day work, but it would increase understanding of foreign peoples and ideas.

Second, that a pool of individuals who together would have competence in all of the languages of the world should be developed. This took account of the unexpected needs that can arise for linguists, as well as daily demands. It also recognized the value in making friends by being able to speak to people in their own tongue. Further, it noted the increasing importance of Africa and Southeast Asia, and of the limited competence in the languages spoken in these areas.

Third, the program was to be directed not only at developing a language competence, but, equally important, at encouraging all personnel to maintain their language ability.

In developing a program it was recognized that with limited manpower it would be necessary to build up language competence simultaneously with performance of daily tasks. Therefore incentives would be needed to encourage personnel to work on their languages in off-duty hours.

The Language Development Program was put into effect on 4 February 1957. It provides a system of cash awards for those employees who learn a language, and annual payments for those who maintain or increase their language competence. These awards range from \$50 to a maximum of \$1200, depending on the degree of difficulty of the language and the degree of proficiency acquired. Employees who learn a language during off-duty hours receive twice the amount that is received by those who acquire languages during duty hours.

Awards for learning a language are made only after an employee has passed oral and written exams which indicate the degree of proficiency.

Awards for proficiency are divided into two categories: specialized and comprehensive, each with three scales--elementary, intermediate and high. Specialized proficiency is either primarily in speaking only, or primarily in reading and translating only. Comprehensive, on the other hand, requires proficiency in speaking, reading and writing.

The languages are divided into three groups in order of increasing difficulty:

The first group of ten languages is composed principally of the Nordic and Romance languages, and awards range from \$50 for

for an elementary skill in a specialized use of the language, to \$400 for high-comprehensive proficiency. Annual awards for maintaining a proficiency in one of these languages range from \$200 a year for high-comprehensive ability to nothing for only an elementary ability in either comprehensive or specialized uses.

The second group of languages consists of 26 different tongues including Russian, Hindi, Urdu and Swahili. Awards for achieving ability in any of these languages ranges from \$100 for an elementary skill in specialized use, to \$800 for acquiring a high-comprehensive ability. Annual maintenance awards commence with intermediate-specialized knowledge at \$100 and range up to \$400 for maintaining high-comprehensive skill.

The third group of languages consists of three: Chinese, Japanese and Korean. Awards for learning any of these start at \$200 for elementary-specialized ability, and up to \$1200 for high-comprehensive. Annual maintenance awards start with intermediate-specialized at \$200 a year and go up to \$600 a year for high-comprehensive ability.

In administering the program a Qualifications Register is maintained, with a Language Data Record on each individual with linguistic ability. No achievement awards will be made for proficiency possessed at the initiation of the program, or possessed when entering on duty with the Agency. No maintenance awards will be paid for comprehensive proficiency acquired

prior to employment by residence abroad, or where linguistic ability was the primary reason for hiring. The program is open to all personnel except those who have not applied for Career Service status, or those who have been turned down by the Career Service. In some cases the program is open to the wives of staff employees, where linguistic ability on their part is important to the work of their husbands.

In order to provide the facilities necessary for the program, the Language and Area School maintains two fully equipped language laboratories. In these laboratories work with recorded material predominates. Students can listen to tapes made by experts and then record their own pronunciation on erasable tapes to check their progress. The school has 10,000 tapes in forty languages and the laboratories are open from 7:30 a.m. to 8:30 p.m. daily, and from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. on Saturdays. The program also provides for sending students to other regularly established language schools.

Class sections are organized with a minimum of five and a maximum of nine students. Each class has five hours of instruction per week, plus seven hours of outside study and language laboratory work. The average course lasts for 16 weeks. To accommodate personnel who wish to study languages during non-duty hours, morning classes are held from 7:15 to 8:15 a.m. and evening classes from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m.

In order to provide sufficient instructors to accommodate the number of personnel seeking to learn or improve their languages under this incentive

As of January 1958, there were 350 students taking the voluntary, non-duty-hour language training program in addition to 208 individuals studying languages during duty hours. The 350 taking voluntary language training were enrolled in 47 courses in 12 different languages: Arabic, Czech, Greek, Chinese, Finnish, Persian, Polish, Russian, Italian, French, Spanish and German.